

# Manufacturing Career Pathway

MISSOURI ECONOMIC RESEARCH & INFORMATION CENTER  
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION  
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
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## What are Career Pathways?

Career Pathways are groups of occupations within a career field. Occupations within a pathway share common skills, knowledge, and interests. The pathways use industry-recognized credentials and are examples of how different levels of training or education can help provide opportunities for career advancement.

### Missouri Numbers:



**11,186 Employers**



**312,208 Workers**



**\$74,441 Average Wage**

### Why Have a Career in Manufacturing?

Manufacturing creates the products people need and want. From clothing to computers, almost everything we touch throughout the day is manufactured. Manufacturing represents 12.6 percent of total private sector employment in Missouri, employing 312,208 workers across 11,186 businesses in 2023. Employment in Manufacturing has been steadily growing, increasing by 1.1 percent per year from 2018 to 2023.

Missouri has high employment concentrations in Manufacturing, particularly in *Leather & Allied Products*, as well as *Transportation Equipment*. Wages in Manufacturing averaged \$74,441 in 2023, higher than the \$62,563 state average for private industries.

Manufacturing encourages creativity and analytical thinking, with an opportunity for a meaningful and rewarding career with good pay and advancement in the areas of Production, Business Operations, and Engineering and Maintenance.

### Know the Basics

The Manufacturing industry refers to material and product producers and the industries that support them. Soft skills, such as interpersonal skills, professionalism, and dependability, are important in all industries and occupations, including Manufacturing occupations. Manufacturing jobs can revolve around shifts and production quotas, so dependability and flexibility are valued characteristics. Manufacturing employees need to have customer service skills, such as explaining the benefits of a product or service and accepting criticism as a professional company representative. Safety and quality control are also critical in this industry, so attention to details and continuous learning are necessary.

### Skills needed for Success:

Manufacturing has industry-wide technical competencies that represent the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in this industry. Some of the skills needed for success in the Manufacturing industry include manufacturing process design, development, maintenance, repair, knowledge of and compliance with government regulations, as well as the ability to adapt and consider new ways of doing things.

### Who's Hiring in Missouri?

**Boeing**  
**Honeywell International**  
**Simmons Prepared Foods**  
**Johnson & Johnson**  
**Ford**



## Production

## Business Operations & Sales

## Engineering & Maintenance

### Now

#### Short-Term On-the-Job Training

**Helpers-Production Workers**  
Entry: \$33,390 Average: \$39,470

**Customer Service Reps.**  
Entry: \$34,540 Average: \$43,280

**Helpers-Installation,  
Maintenance, & Repair Workers**  
Entry: \$32,200 Average: \$43,080

**Certificates:** Forklift Operator  
Certification

**Certificates:** Business  
Administration

**Certificates:** Industrial Maintenance

### Next

#### Certificate, Associate Degree, Apprenticeship, Moderate- to Long-Term On-the-Job Training

**Machine Operators**  
Entry: \$26K-\$49K Average: \$30K-\$65K

**First-Line Supervisors  
of Production Workers**  
Entry: \$49,940 Average: \$67,880

**CNC Programmers**  
Entry: \$49,470 Average: \$63,910

**Certificates:** Forklift Operator,  
Machine Operator, CNC Machinist  
Technology

**Executive Administrative  
Assistants**  
Entry: \$42,370 Average: \$57,690

**Sales Representatives,  
Wholesale & Manufacturing**  
Entry: \$45,820 Average: \$74,090

**Degrees:** Business  
Administration & Management

**Industrial Machinery Mechanics**  
Entry: \$47,370 Average: \$58,880

**Mechanical Drafter**  
Entry: \$50,780 Average: \$66,020

**Industrial Engineering Techs**  
Entry: \$49,470 Average: \$66,310

**Degrees:** Engineering  
**Certificates:** Industrial  
Maintenance, CAD Certificate

### Later

#### Bachelor's Degree or Advanced Degree

**Industrial Production Managers**  
Entry: \$80,910 Average: \$117,000

**General Operations Managers**  
Entry: \$49,690 Average: \$98,520

**Mechanical Engineers**  
Entry: \$74,080 Average: \$90,980

**Sales Managers**  
Entry: \$71,750 Average: \$130,680

**Electrical Engineers**  
Entry: \$79,510 Average: \$103,690

**Buyers & Purchasing Agents**  
Entry: \$47,360 Average: \$70,690

**Industrial Engineers**  
Entry: \$76,060 Average: \$99,270

**Degrees:** Engineering,  
Business Administration &  
Management

**Degrees:** Business Administration  
& Management, Marketing,  
Engineering, Logistics

**Degrees:** Engineering

#### Sources:

Lightcast™

Employment and Training Administration, Competency Model Clearinghouse

2023 Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Top employers data is based on 2024 online job ads



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